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(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): MATSUSHITA ELECTRIC WORKS LTD. [JP/JP]; 1048, Oaza-Kadoma, Kadoma-shi, Osaka, 5718686 (JP).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): FUKUDA, Kenichi [JP/JP]; c/o Matsushita Electric Works, Ltd., 1048, Oaza-Kadoma, Kadoma-shi, Osaka, 5718686 (JP). YAMASHITA, Kouji [JP/JP]; c/o Matsushita Electric Works, Ltd., 1048, Oaza-Kadoma, Kadoma-shi, Osaka, 5718686 (JP)..

(74) Agents: NISHIKAWA, Yoshiaki et al.; c/o Hokuto Patent Attorneys Office Umeda-Daiichiseimei Bldg. 5th Floor, 12-17, Umeda 1-chome, Kita-ku, Osaka-shi, Osaka, 5300001 (JP).

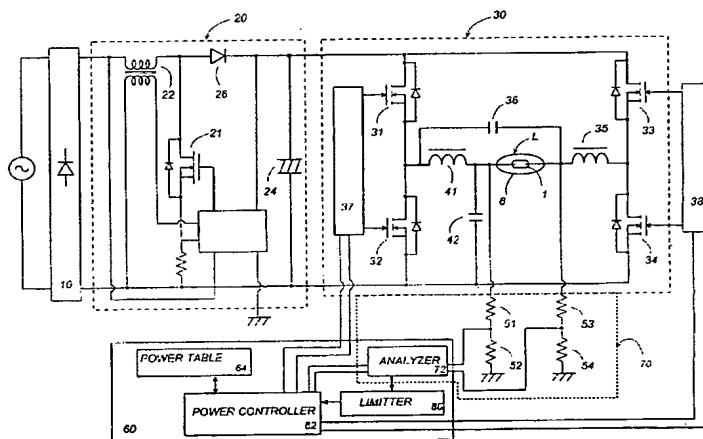
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(54) Title: DISCHARGE LAMP BALLAST WITH DETECTION OF ABNORMAL DISCHARGE OUTSIDE THE ARC TUBE



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(57) Abstract: A discharge lamp ballast is designed to limit or interrupt its AC output power to the discharge lamp upon occurrence of an abnormal discharge outside of an arc tube. A detector is included to examine a lamp voltage once in each of the positive and negative half-cycles or in each one complete cycle of the AC output power and to identify the abnormal discharge when there is a particular change in the monitored lamp voltage. The particular change may be defined by a single logic or by combination of several logics each designed to represent specific characteristic for the abnormal discharges of several types.